

Message Text

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21

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5947

INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 5742

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PE,CH,BO

SUBJ: BOLIVIAN ACCESS TO SEA

1. PERUVIAN ARMY OFFICER TOLD EMBOFF IN CONFIDENCE THAT A COMMISSION WITH REPRESENTATION FROM ALL MILITARY SERVICES AND THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAS BEEN STUDYING FOR SOME TIME THE ISSUE OF BOLIVIAN ACCESS TO THE SEA WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF CHILE/PERU RELATIONS.
 2. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, THE COMMISSION HAS SUBMITTED A RECOMMENDATION THAT THE GOP SEIZE THE INITIATIVE AND ANNOUNCE THAT PERU WOULD NOT EXERCISE ITS RIGHT OF VETO GUARANTEED BY 1929 TREATY SHOULD CHILE AND BOLIVIA AGREE ON BOLIVIAN ACCESS TO THE SEA AT ARICA. COMMISSION MEMBERS APPARENTLY AGREED THAT PERU INITIATIVE RE FOREGOING VETO PRIVILEGE SHOULD CHILE BOLIVIA AGREEMENT BE REACHED WOULD HELP EASE TENSIONS IN BORDER AREA. COMMISSION DECIDED THAT BOLIVIAN PRESENCE AT ARICA WOULD BE USEFUL BUFFER ZONE INSURANCE AGAINST CONFLICT GENERATED BY BORDER PROBLEMS OR MISCALCULATIONS.
 3. MILITARY OFFICER CAUTIONED THAT COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS WERE CONFIDENTIAL; THEY DID NOT WISH CHILE OR BOLIVIA TO BE AWARE OF COMMISSION EXISTENCE OR ITS RECOMMENDATIONS.
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SHOULD GOP TURN DOWN RECOMMENDATIONS, NEIGHBORS MIGHT

SPECULATE AS TO REASONS FOR DOING SO.

4. COMMENT: PRESIDENT VELASCO HAS FIRMLY DECLARED THAT 1929 TREATY IS CONTROLLING AND THAT PERU WOULD USE ITS VETO TO PREVENT ANY CHILEAN/BOLIVIAN ATTEMPT TO MODIFY STATUS OF FORMER PERUVIAN PROVINCE. EMBASSY HAS NO EVIDENCE THAT GOP DECISIONMAKERS HAVE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION WHICH COULD BE CONSIDERED SURRENDER OF NATIONAL TERRITORY. HOWEVER, BY WAIVING ITS VETO RIGHT THE GOP WOULD AVOID BEING FORCED TO RESPOND IN FUTURE TO POSSIBLE CHILEAN/BOLIVIAN INITIATIVE. SUCH A GOP GESTURE, ALTHOUGH IT MIGHT MOMENTARILY THROW CHILEANS DIPLOMATICALLY OFF BALANCE, COULD BE USEFUL STEP IN EASING TENSIONS IN BORDER AREA AND SHOULD RECEIVE INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AS GESTURE FOR REGIONAL PEACE, IF GOP ACTUALLY MAKES SUCH A MOVE.
DEAN

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NNN

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